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ABSTRACT

This guide to German language proficiency standards is intended to aid the University of Minnesota's staff in developing curricula and tests for the university's language courses, and to help foreign language teachers outside the university understand the university's language programs. The standards are geared toward the language skills expected of students having completed 3 quarters of university study (for program entrance) or 6 quarters (for graduation). An introductory section outlines the process of developing the standards, the resources necessary for proficiency-oriented programs to bring most students to the levels defined, and notes on interpreting and applying the proficiency guidelines. A section on testing describes the methods and instruments used. For each of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Provisional Proficiency Guidelines are presented and the university's program entrance and graduation standards are outlined. (MSE)

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Foreign Language
Proficiency Standards for Entrance and Graduation

College of Liberal Arts

A Guide for Teachers
of
German

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University of Minnesota
1986

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The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer and specifically invites and encourages applications from women and minorities.

In the past few years the University of Minnesota has increased what was already a sizable commitment to international education. Part of the increased commitment was a strengthening of the foreign language requirement in the College of Liberal Arts.

The strengthened graduation requirement on the one hand says that a graduate of CLA should have significant skills in at least one foreign language. The entrance standard, on the other hand, signifies CLA support for foreign language learning which occurs prior to admission to CLA, in elementary schools, secondary school, or in other colleges and universities.

Important in the entrance standard and the graduation requirement is the fact that they are stated in terms of proficiency: How well can the student use the language in real communication? A statement in terms of proficiency is a departure from usual measuring of the past. The standard/requirement is not simply a measure of how long students have been enrolled in foreign language classes, nor is it a measure of what students know about the language.

This Guide for Teachers is intended as a guide for our staff in development of curriculum and tests for our CLA language courses. It is also intended for foreign language teachers outside the University so that they may better understand our foreign language programs.

I would like to thank the teachers at the University but particularly teachers from high schools and other colleges who participated in the development of the proficiency standards described in this document. I hope the experience has been as exciting for you as it has for us.

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INTRODUCTION

The College of Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota has mandated the establishment of proficiency standards according to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for entrance to the College and as a requirement for graduation with the B.A. degree. The first step in establishing entrance standards and graduation requirements has been consultation with teachers of French, German and Spanish at all levels of instruction in the state of Minnesota. This group, after lengthy deliberations and training, set preliminary standards for the three most commonly taught languages. Before presentation of the standards and requirements, however, it is essential to present some of the assumptions with which the consultative group operated.

This *Prospectus* is just one attempt on the part of the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota to pass on information to language teachers, school advisers and administrators at all levels of instruction. It is important to point out here what this document is not: it is not a theoretical statement; it is not a curricular guide; it is not a statement on method. By communicating the new standard for entrance and the new requirement for graduation, the College does not intend to interfere in any way with solid programs of second language instruction already available to students throughout the state.

First and foremost, it is important to understand that the CLA proficiency standards are geared to what is expected after three quarters at the University for entrance and, for graduation, after six quarters. "Expected" is not to be interpreted as the goal for an average student at the end of the third or the sixth quarter. The term "expected" means, rather, the level of proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing which most students should have if they pass the course. Any curricular design which desires to prepare its students for entrance or for graduation should set its goals at least one ACTFL level beyond the standards set by CLA for entrance and for graduation.

The preliminary proficiency standards for entrance and graduation are as follows:

	ENTRANCE STANDARD	GRADUATION REQUIREMENT
Listening:	Intermediate Low	Intermediate High
Reading:	Intermediate Low	Intermediate High
Speaking:	Novice High	Intermediate Mid
Writing:	Novice High	Intermediate Mid

The proficiency levels for the Entrance Standard and the Graduation Requirement were the result of a lengthy process of training and deliberation. In Summer 1984, a group of 30 Minnesota teachers of French, German and Spanish completed a three-week intensive ACTFL proficiency training program conducted by nationally known experts. The group had 10 teachers in each of the three languages, and within each language group, there was equal representation from secondary and post-secondary teachers. In the year following this training workshop, most of the 30 teachers continued with a series of three more specialized workshops and follow-up sessions: 1) curricular implications for the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines; 2) testing theories especially for listening, reading and writing; and 3) writing a pool of test items for pilot testing. It is this group of specially trained teachers which entered into lengthy deliberations and decided upon the proficiency levels for the Entrance Standard and the Graduation Requirement.

RESOURCES NECESSARY FOR PROFICIENCY-ORIENTED PROGRAMS TO BRING MOST STUDENTS TO THE LEVELS SET FOR THE ENTRANCE STANDARD AND THE GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

Class Size

The University of Minnesota has decided that individual classes in French, German and Spanish will not exceed 25 students. It is important to emphasize that this maximum of 25 students is not meant as an average; no single class admits more than 25 students. Classes this size allow teachers to maximize opportunities to deal with content, function and accuracy as prescribed in detailed descriptions of levels for the Entrance Standard and the Graduation Requirement (presented in the next main section of this prospectus). Classes this size also permit adequate input, small group work (in threes rather than in fives) as well as regular written exercises for correction and feedback. When schools schedule classes larger than 25 students they may assume that student proficiency will suffer.

Multi-Year Classes

Effective classroom management is not possible where teachers have to teach students who have had 2, 3 and 4 years of instruction and are placed in a single class. Though all second language classes have students at differing proficiency levels, proficiency development is very difficult when the range of levels is too large.

Use of Time

A proportion of classroom time (up to 40%) should be spent on proficiency practice where the focus of the lesson is on the expression of meaning rather than accuracy. If proficiency practice forces some drill out of the classroom, this accuracy drill may be accomplished through homework or by means of computer courseware. Group work, use of paired learning, etc, may allow more time for proficiency-oriented activities. Time for proficiency development is a critical factor. The amount of time on task for the development of proficiency in an academic year is limited.

There are approximately 115 hours in an academic year on the college/university level; there are approximately 170 hours on the secondary school level of which 100 hours are estimated to be time on task.

Equipment

The following needs are considered minimal by University staff to provide for an effective proficiencybased curriculum in the College of Liberal Arts.

FOR THE CLASSROOM

- An overhead projector
- Tape recorder
- Slide-filmstrip projector
- Movie projector
- Small groups: junction box (to connect with tape recorder) and headsets
- Access to video recording and playback
- Adequate supplies, e.g., photocopying, courseware, thermofax
- Resource materials, e.g., dictionaries, at least one major newspaper or magazine, cultural resource materials, a range of reading and listening materials

FOR THE PROGRAM

- A learning laboratory with the following:
- Listening/record stations which allow students both to listen and to record
- Audio-cassette library
- High-speed audio-cassette copier (home study cassettes)
- Portable video record and playback facilities
- Video-cassette library
- Microcomputers (IBM, Apple, Macintosh)
- Computer disk library
- Courseware generation systems need to be available to the instructional staff, e.g., DASHER, which can generate drill materials

Personnel

Staff development should be commensurate with the concept of proficiency; teachers should have the opportunity to become aware of and to use proficiency development concepts in their teaching and curricula. Supervision of instruction should be based on proficiency concepts. Advanced students, Amity aides and other native speakers may be used as informants to help develop proficiency in a proficiency-based curriculum, and team teaching in this kind of program could be useful in presenting a model of communication. Staff exchanges between and among levels could help teachers remain up-to-date in the language. Pre- and in-service teacher preparation should include the following:

1) Cooperative group structures in learning
2) Proficiency-based curricular design
3) Language skills
4) General language teaching methods
5) Testing of language development

At the University, TA's need to have background in language learning and teaching, in addition to a background in their specialization for graduate study. Professional associations (e.g., MCTFL and the AAT groups) could provide opportunities to help teachers keep their language current.

Materials

Publishers must be encouraged to orient materials toward proficiency development, since teachers need support from systematically prepared materials.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTIONS

The descriptions of proficiency at each level in each skill contain three components: content, function, and accuracy. Thus, the descriptions in each of the language skill areas (i.e., listening, reading, speaking, and writing) include information about the topics or *content* areas with which the student is familiar, the linguistic *functions* or tasks that can be expressed and/or understood, as well as the degree of *accuracy* with which the message is communicated and/or understood. Judgments of an individual's proficiency take all three factors into account.

In both the Entrance Standard and Exit Requirement, certain functions, topics, and accuracy levels are expected to be controlled in a sustained manner while others are controlled only partially. Sustained control can be described by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually", while partial control is described by modifiers such as "uneven" or "occasionally". Thus, at the level of Novice High, the student will consistently be able to "list using memorized utterances and use memorized material to ask and answer simple questions" in content areas covering basic social formulae and basic topic areas, but will only sometimes be able to "create statements or questions and participate in very simple face-to-face conversations." Note that at the level of Novice High there is no consistent accuracy. The student's speech will contain numerous errors and will at times be incomprehensible. However, the student will sometimes be able to use the present-tense of the most common regular and irregular verbs and use the concept of subject/verb agreement.

USING THE PROFICIENCY DESCRIPTIONS

How are the following description of proficiency intended to be used? Let's first make it clear what they are not intended to be used for. They are only descriptions of the minimal proficiency expected at each level. They should therefore be interpreted neither as statements of goals, nor as descriptions of curriculum. Given the gradual, developmental nature of the language acquisition process, the curriculum of a second language program must be targeted well beyond these proficiency descriptions. In fact, it is only when we incorporate in the curriculum functions and content which go beyond the minimal proficiency levels that the minimal levels themselves will be

attained by our students. Thus, the guidelines do not in themselves constitute a curriculum but are rather only a framework for a curriculum. In the same way, the guidelines are not in themselves tests of language proficiency, but rather a framework for testing.

In addition to serving as a framework for curriculum and testing, the guidelines provide a potentially very useful aid to communication about language learning between all parties interested in this process. The guidelines give us a more precise picture of the language learning process than we have had before, plus providing a relatively standard framework of levels, so that we can talk with each other with much more certainty that we understand each other. Thus, the guidelines are already facilitating communication across educational levels such as elementary to secondary and secondary to college and university, enabling us to begin to deal with the problems of articulation across these levels. Another important area of communication is that between language educators and their "clients" or other persons to whom they are responsible, namely students, parents, and administrators. The guidelines offer us concrete concepts for talking about what are realistic expectations for the outcome of language study in a given situation.

You will notice that we have included in what follows the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for all levels (except those described for the College of Liberal Arts entrance standards and exit requirements, where they have been broken into content, function and accuracy). The description of the Superior level is included in order to set the levels we are primarily concerned with into a larger developmental context. It must be kept in mind that reaching the Superior level normally takes years of study as well as living in the culture, and this is in fact a relatively infrequent accomplishment.

TESTING

Testing of language proficiency is integral to the CLA language requirement. There are two test batteries, one for the Entrance Standard and one for the Exit Requirement. Each test will include the four modalities of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The battery for the Entrance Standard tests listening and reading at Intermediate-Low, and speaking and writing at Novice-High. The battery for the Exit Requirement tests listening and reading at Intermediate-High, and speaking and writing at Intermediate-Mid.

These tests are criterion referenced tests which means that they are directly related to the descriptions of proficiency at the levels designated for the four modalities within the Entrance Standard or Exit Requirement. The form of the test is analogous to the Oral Interview Procedure. Several items, approximately 20%, are used as a warm-up. They are below the designated proficiency levels and are intended to give the student an opportunity to "get into the language". Forty percent of the items are at the designated level in what is called a Level Check. This number of items is to assure that students can sustain the designated proficiency level. Another 20% of the items in the test are in a category called Probe. These items are expected to push the student beyond the expected proficiency level. The final 20% of the items or Wind-Down intend to bring the student back to the level of proficiency designated for that modality. These are items that the individual, having the desired level, should feel comfortable responding to. It is intended that the students would leave the tests with a feeling that they are successful. In this test battery, the test items are not ordered in the usual easy to most difficulty items. Instead, they are organized by Warm-up, Level Check, Probe, and Wind-Down.

The manner of testing for proficiency at the Entrance Standard Level is generally well-known. The Reception Modalities (Listening and Reading) will be tested with the usual multiple-choice items for objective scoring. These tests have two foci: some discrete elements of a text and general comprehension. Some texts will be tested with several questions. Their intent is to determine if the student got the details in the text. Other texts will have only one question. Those items are intended to require a general comprehension of the text. For the Production Modalities (Speaking and Writing), the tests require students to produce language. The Speaking Test is a recorded test. Students respond to questions on a pre-recorded tape. For the Writing Test, students will respond to questions in writing.

These tests will be timed. The Speaking Test takes approximately 20 minutes. The tests for Listening, Reading, and Writing take approximately 45 minutes each. There will be ample time within this framework for students to demonstrate their ability to sustain proficiency at the designated levels.

Novice-Low
No practical understanding of spoken German. Understanding is limited to cognates, borrowed words, high frequency social conventions, and occasional isolated words, such as *Tag, Auto, Haus, heute, morgen, schön.* Essentially no ability to comprehend even short utterances.

Novice-Mid
Sufficient comprehension to understand some memorized words within predictable areas of need. Vocabulary for comprehension is limited to simple elementary needs, basic courtesy formulae, such as *Guten Tag, Wie geht's? Auf Wiedersehen, Bis morgen, Danke,*and very simple memorized material relating to everyday objects and situations. Utterances understood rarely exceed more than two or three words at a time and ability to understand is characterized by long pauses for assimilation and by repeated requests on the listener's part for repetition, and/or a slower rate of speech. Confuses words that sound similar, such as *fährt/Fahrt,* and pronouns, *er/ihr.*

Novice-High
Sufficient comprehension to understand a number of memorized utterances in areas of immediate need. Comprehends slightly longer utterances in situations where the context aids understanding, such as at the table, in a restaurant/store, in a train/bus. Phrases recognized have for the most part been memorized; *Die Milch/Marmelade, bitte. Die Fahrkarten, bitte.* Comprehends vocabulary common to daily needs. Comprehends simple questions/statements about family members, age, address, weather, time, daily activities and interests: *Wie viele Brüder/Schwester haben Sie? Wie alt sind Sie? Wie ist das Wetter heute?* Misunderstandings arise from failure to perceive critical sounds or endings. Understands even tailored speech with difficulty but gets some main ideas. Often requires repetition and/or slowed rate of speed for comprehension, even when listening to persons such as teachers who are used to speaking with non-natives.

GERMAN ENTRANCE STANDARD: Listening (Intermediate-Low)
SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls:	Is usually able to:	Is usually able to understand:
--basic survival needs --very simple courtesy requirements --very simple travel requirements --very familiar topics: meals, lodging, transportation, time, simple instructions (e.g., instructions such as Gehen Sie geradeaus! or Sie müssen links abgehen.) --routine commands (e.g., from customs officials, or teachers, or police such as Darf ich Ihren Pass sehen? or Machen Sie den Koffer auf, bitte!	--understand non-memorized simple questions and statements --understand simple face-to-face conversations	--basic facts and main ideas (i.e., the gist) in speech tailored to non-natives

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls: --some simple topics beyond basic survival needs (e.g., personal history and leisure time activities with such questions as Wo sind Sie geboren? Was tun Sie während der Freizeit? Was machen Sie gerne am Wochenende?)	Is sometimes able to: --understand simple conversations	Is sometimes able to: --understand basic constructions (e.g., subject/verb agreement, noun/adjective agreement) --recognize past and future time by verb form (e.g., Ich werde in die Stadt gehen and Ich bin in die Stadt gegangen and als ich in die Stadt ging) --recognize past and future time with adverbs of time (e.g., morgen, heute, gestern)

ACTFL PROVISIONAL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES: GERMAN LISTENING

Intermediate-Mid

Sufficient comprehension to understand simple conversations about some survival needs and some limited social conventions. Vocabulary permits understanding on topics beyond basic survival needs (e.g. personal history and leisure time activities), such as *Wo sind Sie geboren? Was tun Sie während der Freizeit? Was machen Sie gerne am Wochenende?* Evidence of understanding basic constructions, e.g., subject-verb and noun-adjective agreement; some inflection is understood. Understanding of grammatical structure allows recognition of future and past references either by verb forms, such as the constructed future *(Ich werde in die Stadt gehen)*, the present perfect *(Ich bin in die Stadt gegangen)*, and the simple past *(Als ich in die Stadt ging...)*, or with adverbs of time, such as *morgen, heute, gestern.*

SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls:	Is usually able to:	Is usually able to:
--survival needs --simple social conventions --topics beyond immediate survival needs such as biographical information (e.g., Geburtsort, Geburtsdatum, Mädchenname der Mutter/Frau, Heimatstadt, Kindheitserlebnisse, Jugenderlebnisse, Urlaubspläne, Urlaubserlebnisse, Urlaubsziele) --familiar topics relating to home, work, school, daily activities, simple purchases, directions	--comprehend short conversations --understand the gist of longer conversations	--understand sentences, including those with dass/wenn/weil clauses --understand the semantic differences between time utterances such as Er war einen Monat in Köln, Er ist seit einem Monat in Köln, Sie sind nur eine Woche hier --understand more common tense forms and simpler word order patterns

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" and "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls:	Is sometimes able to:	Is sometimes able to understand:
--routine social conventions --very simple school or work requirements --everyday topics such as common personal news, family news, and well-known current events --topics in special fields of interest	--comprehend longer conversations --understand descriptions and narration about current, past and future events --understand the gist of simple radio broadcasts, discussions, and speeches	--face-to-face speech in standard German spoken at a normal rate by a native speaker not used to dealing with foreigners

Advanced

Sufficient comprehension to understand conversations about routine social conventions and limited school or work requirements. Able to understand face-to-face speech in standard German spoken at a normal rate, with some repetition and rewording, by a native speaker not used to dealing with foreigners. Able to get the gist of some radio broadcasts. Understands everyday topics, common personal and family news, well-known current events, and routine matters involving school or work; descriptions and narration about current, past and future events; the essential points of a discussion or speech at an elementary level on topics in special fields of interest. For example: *Wer hat die hiesige Wahl gewonnen? Wie reagierten die Deutschen auf den Bau neuer Kernkraftwerke? Zu welchem Grad leidet der Mittelstand unter der Inflation? Wurde die Kaufkraft durch die Inflation eigeschränkt?*

Advanced Plus

Sufficient comprehension to understand most routine social conventions, conversations on school or work requirements, and discussions on concrete topics related to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows remarkable ability and ease of understanding, but comprehension may break down under tension or pressure (including unfavorable listening conditions). May display weakness or deficiency due to inadequate vocabulary base or less than secure knowledge of grammar and syntax. May be deficient or uneven in completely comprehending conversations or discussions by educated native speakers due to a less-than-adequate knowledge of more complex syntactic structures (tense usage in simple and complex statements, passive voice and extended adjective constructions, relative clauses, word order, subject-object relationships). Still has some difficulty following radio broadcasts. Can sometimes detect emotional overtones. Increasing ability to understand "between the lines" (i.e., to make inferences.)

Superior

Sufficient comprehension to understand the essentials of all speech in standard dialects, including technical discussions within a special field. Has sufficient understanding of face-to-face speech, delivered with normal clarity and speed in standard dialects, on general topics and areas of special interest; understands hypothesizing and supported opinions. Has broad enough vocabulary that rarely has to ask for paraphrasing or explanation. Can follow accurately the essentials of conversations between education native speakers, reasonable clear telephone calls, radio broadcasts, standard news items, oral reports, some oral technical reports, and public addresses on non-technical subjects. May not understand native speakers if they speak very quickly or use some slang or unfamiliar dialect. Can often detect emotional overtones. Can understand "between the lines" (i.e., make inferences).

Novice-Low

Unable to function in spoken German. Oral production is limited to occasional isolated words such as *ja, nein, ich, Sie, Fritz* (name), *Fräulein.* Essentially no communicative ability.

Novice-Mid

Able to operate only in a very limited capacity within very predictable areas of need. Vocabulary is limited to that necessary to express simple elementary needs and basic courtesy formulae such as *Guten Tag/Morgen; Auf Wiedersehen; Das ist...*(name) *was ist...; Wer ist das? Danke; Bitte; Grüss Gott.* Speakers at this level cannot create original sentences or cope with the simplest situations. Pronunciation is frequently unintelligible and is strongly influenced by the first language. Can be understood only with difficulty, even by persons such as teachers who are used to dealing with non-native speakers or in interactions where the context strongly supports the utterance.

GERMAN ENTRANCE STANDARD: Speaking (Novice-High)

SUSTAINED CONTROL: **Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".**

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls: --immediate needs --common areas such as: colors, days of the week, names of immediate family members, months of the year, numbers, and names of basic objects	Is usually able to: --list using memorized utterances --use memorized material to ask and answer simple questions	No consistent accuracy SEE PARTIAL CONTROL

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls:	Is sometimes able:	Is sometimes able to:
--routine survival needs --routine travel needs --very simple courtesy requirements --familiar topic areas, for example: ordering a meal, getting a hotel room, asking directions, and the process of learning the target language --topics beyond basic survival needs such as those involving the exchange of personal information (e.g., autobiographical information, leisure time activities, academic subjects)	--create simple statements and simple questions --maintain very simple face-to-face conversations	--use some personal pronouns (ich, sich) with some present tense verbs --use appropriate question words for simple questions --be understood by persons used to dealing with foreigners

ACTFL PROVISIONAL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES: GERMAN SPEAKING

Intermediate-Low

Able to satisfy basic survival needs and minimum courtesy requirements. In areas of immediate need or in very familiar topics, can ask and answer some simple questions and respond to and sometimes initiate simple statements. Can make one's needs known with great difficulty in a simple survival situation, such as ordering a meal, getting a hotel room, and asking for directions; vocabulary is adequate to talk simply about learning the target language and other academic studies. For example: *Wieviel kostet das? Wo ist der Bahnhof? Ich möchte zu...Wieviel Uhr ist es? Ich lerne hier Deutsch; Ich studiere schon 2 Jahre; Ich habe eine Wohnung.* Awareness of gender apparent (many mistakes). Word order is random. Verbs are generally in the present tense. Some correct use of predicate adjectives and personal pronouns (*ich, wir*). No clear distinction made between polite and familiar address forms (*Sie, du*). Awareness of case system sketchy. Frequent errors in all structures. Misunderstandings frequently arise from limited vocabulary and grammar and erroneous phonology, but, with repetition, can generally be understood by native speakers in regular contact with foreigners attempting to speak German. Little precision in information conveyed owing to tentative state of grammatical development and little or no use of modifiers.

SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls:	Is usually able to:	Is usually able to:
--routine travel needs --routine survival needs --topics beyond basic survival needs such as those involving the exchange of personal information (e.g., autobiographical information, leisure time activities, academic subjects)	--ask and answer questions --initiate and respond to simple statements --maintain simple face-to-face conversations	--be understood by persons used to dealing with foreigners --use some basic structures, i.e. subject-verb agreement, word order in simple statements (excluding adverbs) and in interrogative forms, present tense of irregular and imperative of separable prefix verbs (Kommen Sie mit!)

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls:	Is sometimes able to:	Is sometimes able to:
--survival needs --routine social demands --simple school and work requirements --topics of current public interest (e.g., current events, student rules and regulations) --topics of personal interest (e.g., work, leisure time activities) --autobiographical information	--initiate and sustain social and general conversations --narrate and describe --communicate facts --explain a point of view in an uncomplicated fashion --communicate needs and thoughts in a situation with a complication (e.g., calling a mechanic for help with a stalled car, losing traveler's checks)	--use past participles --use imperfect forms --use separable prefix verbs --use modal auxiliaries --correct gender markers for high-frequency nouns --be understood by native speakers not used to dealing with foreigners

Intermediate-High

Able to satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands. Developing flexibility in language production although fluency is still uneven. Can initiate and sustain a general conversation on factual topics beyond basic survival needs. Can give autobiographical information and discuss leisure time activities. Most verbs are still in the present tense, more common past participles appear (*gegangen, gesehen, geschlafen).* Many mistakes in choice of auxiliary (**habe gegangen* with the present perfect),. Past tense is attempted also with common imperfect forms (*sagte, hatte, war).* Several high-frequency separable prefix verbs appear in the indicative (*ich gehe mit).* There is inconsistent coding of proper dative and accusative cases following prepositions in singular and plural. Attempts to expand discourse which is only accurate in short sentences. Frequently gropes for words. Comprehensible to native speakers used to dealing with foreigners, but still has to repeat utterances frequently to be understood by the general public.

Advanced

Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited school and work requirements. Can handle with confidence but not with facility most social and general conversations. Can narrate, describe and explain in past, present, and future times. Can communicate facts--what, who, when, where, how much--and can explain a point of view, in an uncomplicated fashion, but cannot conjecture or coherently support an opinion. Can talk in a general way about topics of current public interest (e.g., current events, student rules and regulations), as well as personal interest (work, leisure time activities) and can give autobiographical information. Can make factual comparisons (e.g., life in a city vs. life in a rural area). Can handle work-related requirements, needing help in handling any complications or difficulties. Can make a point forcefully and communicate needs and thoughts in a situation with a complication (e.g., calling a mechanic for help with a stalled car, losing traveler's checks). Has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to respond simply with some circumlocutions. Can be understood by native speakers not used to dealing with foreigners in spite of some pronunciation difficulties. Good control of all verbs in present tense, past participles of most verbs, simple past tense of most irregular verbs, modal auxiliaries, most separable verbs and some reflexives. Double infinitives in main clauses may be attempted (mistakes are expected). Genders of high frequency words are mostly correct. Some inaccuracy in choice of prepositions as well as in distinctions between position and motion. Speaker is hesitant at times and gropes for words, uses paraphrases and fillers, uncomplicated dependent clauses (*dass, weil)* but mistakes are expected when sentences are joined in limited discourse.

*Denotes an error characteristics of speakers at this level.

Advanced Plus

Able to satisfy most school and work requirements and show some ability to communicate on concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Can narrate, describe, and explain in past, present, and future time. Can consistently communicate facts and explain points of view in an uncomplicated fashion. Shows some ability to support opinions, explain in detail, and hypothesize, although only sporadically. Can discuss topics of current and personal interest, and can handle most situations that arise in everyday life (see Advanced Level examples) but will have difficulty with unfamiliar situations (e.g., losing a contact lens in a sink drain and going to a neighbor to borrow a wrench). Normally controls general vocabulary with some groping still evident. Speaking performance is often uneven (e.g., strong in either grammar or vocabulary but not in both). Good control of most verbs in present and past tense and most imperative forms. Irregular control of infinitive clauses with *zu*, conditional sentences (with *würde* plus infinitive, *hätte*, *wäre*, *könnte*, and *da(r)-* and *wo(r)-* compounds. Better control of prepositions and adjective endings but mistakes will occur. Control of dependent clauses. Distinguishes between subordinating and coordinating conjunctions and how they affect word order (*denn*, *weil*). Good control of limited discourse, but many errors in all more complicated structures. Often shows remarkable fluency and ease of speech, but under tension or pressure language may break down.

Superior

Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. Can discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease. Can support opinions, hypothesize, and conjecture. May not be able to tailor language to fit various audiences or discuss highly abstract topics in depth. Vocabulary is broad enough that speaker rarely has to grope for a word, good use of circumlocution. Pronunciation may still be obviously foreign. Control of grammar is good. Sporadic errors but no patterns of error in tenses, cases, attributive adjectives, pronouns, most verbs plus preposition, dependent clauses, subjunctive II (present and past). Control less consistent in low frequency structures such as passive plus modals, the *lassen* construction, verbs plus specific prepositions (*achten, auf, sich halten an, sich irren in*), directional adverbs (*hinauf, hinunter, herüber*), double infinitives in dependent clauses (*dass er das nicht hat machen sollen*). Varying degree of competence in usage of idiomatic expression and slang. Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker.

Novice-Low
No functional ability in reading German.

Novice-Mid
Sufficient understanding of written German to interpret highly contextualized words or cognates within predictable areas. Vocabulary for comprehension limited to simple elementary needs, such as names, addresses, dates, signs indicating names of streets and avenues (*Strasse, Weg)*; building names *(Hotel, Restaurant, Apotheke)*; short informative signs (*Eingang, Ausgang, Rauchverbot, Taxi, Fernsprecher, Flughafen, Strassenbahn)*. Material understood rarely exceeds a single phrase and comprehension requires successive rereading and checking.

Novice-High
Sufficient comprehension of written language to interpret set expressions in areas of immediate need. Can recognize all letters of German (including umlauted ones and). Where vocabulary has been mastered, can read for instructional and directional purposes standardized messages, phrases or expressions, such as some items on menus (*Tagessuppe, Getränke, Salat)*, schedules, timetables, maps, signs indicating hours of operation, social codes *(Rauchen verboten)*, and street signs (*Haltestelle)*. Vocabulary and grammar limited to the most common nouns, adjectives, questions words, and a few verb forms. Material is read for essential information. Detail is overlooked or misunderstood.

GERMAN ENTRANCE STANDARD: Reading (Intermediate-Low)
SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls:	Is usually able to:	Is usually able to:
--basic survival needs --basic social needs (e.g., social amenities such as simple forms of address, closure, queries about personal life, family, and friends) --familiar idioms dealing with weather, age, personal well-being, and time	--understand recombinations of memorized materials --understand simplest authentic or graded material in printed form --read simple telephone messages, personal notes, or simple letters	--understand main ideas when material parallels structure and syntax of native language --understand simple language with high frequency grammatical, semantic, and syntactical items, for example: NP+VP of most frequent regular verbs in the present tense (e.g., arbeiten, bleiben, glauben, tun); NP+VP of irregular verbs in the present tense (e.g., haben, sein, wissen, werden); NP+VP of the modals in the present tense (e.g., müssen, wollen, können, sollen, durfen, mögen) --decode adverbs rather than verb tenses to determine time

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls: --topics for informative or for social purposes --sporting events (e.g., soccer matches) --cultural events (e.g., concerts) --social events (e.g., parades and celebrations) --advertisements for such everyday items as food, clothing, work or school supplies, and travel	Is sometimes able to: --understand who, what, when, where, why, and how much --understand simple discourse in printed form --read public announcements in response to perceived needs --identify products, prices, and some conditions of sale in popular, illustrated advertising	Is sometimes able to: --understand when syntax is related to simple NP+VP+NP constructions --understand adjective declensions and the use of other determiners such as definite and indefinite articles, demonstratives, possessives, and interrogatives --understand negations (i.e., nein, nicht, kein)

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls: school supplies, and travel --biographical information relating to self, family, age, occupation, residence, personality traits, and common preferences --familiar content --content of high interest	Is sometimes able to: --read personal notes or letters --understand general content of headlines in newspapers such as Die Welt or article titles in popular magazines such as Der Spiegel --understand facts and follow events of simple narration in either authentic or specially prepared materials --use guessing strategies to interpret vocabulary consisting of cognates and of highly contextualized items	Is sometimes able to: --understand the most common strong and weak verbs in the present perfect and past tenses

Intermediate-Mid

Sufficient comprehension to understand in printed form simple discourse for informative or social purposes. In response to perceived needs, can read public announcements to determine who, what, when, where, why, and how much regarding such subjects as sporting events, concerts, parades, and celebrations. Can also identify products, prices, and some conditions of sale in popular, illustrated advertising for everyday items, such as food, clothing, work or school supplies, and travel. Can comprehend a note or letter in which a writer used to dealing with non-native readers describes self and family, ages, occupations, residence, personality traits, and common preferences when high frequency vocabulary or cognates and simple structures are used. Understands the general content of headlines in newspapers, such as *Der Spiegel*, and in *Illustrierten*, if the content is familiar or of high interest. Understands facts and follows events of simple narration in either authentic or especially prepared texts when syntax is related to simple NP + VP +NP constructions. Recognizes negations *(nein, nicht, kein)* and interrogative forms. Generally consistent in interpreting the present, the future as expressed by adverbs of time with the present tense, but recognizes only the most common strong and weak verbs in the present perfect and simple past tenses. Understands adjective declensions and the use of other determiners such as definite and indefinite articles, demonstratives, and possessives, and interrogatives. Has some difficulty matching pronouns to referents and with the use of relative pronouns. Uses guessing strategies to interpret vocabulary consisting of regular cognate patterns, and highly contextualized items. May have to read several times before understanding.

GERMAN EXIT REQUIREMENT: Reading (Intermediate-High)

SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls: --familiar topics for personal communication, information, or recreation: such topics as fashions, gardening, furniture, homes, travel brochures, tourist brochures, travel guides	Is usually able to: --identify main ideas from topic and summary paragraphs --read invitations, social notes, personal letters, and very simple business letters --read simple articles in popular magazines, news publications, or other informational sources --read uncomplicated, yet authentic prose for pleasure --read simple poetry for pleasure --guess at meaning from context of a fictional narrative description or guesses at meaning from cultural information	Is usually able to: --recognize present and past tenses of high-frequency strong and weak verbs --interpret accurately expressions of quantity

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls:	Is sometimes able to:	Is sometimes able to:
--familiar subjects (e.g., sports, movies, theater, food, music), news items, biographical information, and family topics	--read simple authentic printed material or edited textual material --read uncomplicated, authentic prose, newspapers, popular magazines, and personal letters --read unedited simple prose fiction from carefully chosen authors, usually contemporary (e.g., selections in Sunday newspaper supplements, selections in daily newspapers, special anthologies on modern culture)	--distinguish the constructed future and the subjunctive as different from the present, simple past and present perfect --read facts

ACTFL PROVISIONAL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES: GERMAN READING

Advanced

Sufficient comprehension to read simple authentic printed material or edited textual material within a familiar context. Can read uncomplicated, authentic prose on familiar subject (sports, travel, movies, theater, food, music, current events), news items in newspapers and popular magazines, biographical information in personal letters on family topics. Reads within the limits of identifiable vocabulary some unedited texts, such as prose fiction, from carefully chosen authors, usually contemporary. Such selections might appear in newspaper supplements, other daily papers, or special anthologies on modern culture. The constructed future and the subjunctive are appreciated as different from the present, simple past, and present perfect. Conditions contrary to fact are recognized with more than average difficulty. The ability to guess at compounded vocabulary, nouns in specific, within context is becoming more accurate, but still some confusion over grammar and vocabulary not yet assimilated. As far as total comprehension is concerned, is able to read facts, but cannot extend them or put them together to draw inferences.

Advanced Plus

Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual information in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special interests. Able to read for information and description, to follow sequence of events, and to react to information read. Can separate main ideas from lesser ones and use that division to advance understanding. In major newspapers and magazines, can read international items and social and cultural news. Understanding of specialized items depends upon individual interests and background, at this level can read material in own areas of interest. Within literary fields of interest, can read non-esoteric prose, including critical articles and books. Can read signs, posters, advertisements, and public announcements. Can follow simple printed directions for cooking and other projects within areas of expertise. Guesses logically at new words by using linguistics and non-linguistic contexts and prior knowledge. Is able to comprehend most high-frequency idiomatic expressions, but will still have difficulty with figurative meanings. Even though the subjunctive and conditional are better recognized and understood, the reader still has difficulty in detecting subjective attitudes, values, and judgements in what is read.

Superior

Able to read standard newspaper items addressed to the general reader, routine correspondence reports, and technical material in a field of interest at a normal rate of speed (at least 220 WPM). Can gain new knowledge from material in a variety of publications on a wide range of unfamiliar topics related to fields of interest. Can interpret hypotheses, supported opinions, and documented facts, as well as figurative devices, stylistic differences, and humor. Can read most literary genres in the original: novels, essays, poetry, short stories, and most literature written for the general public. Reading ability is not subject dependent. Broad general vocabulary, knowledge of most structures, and development of strategies for logical guessing allow for successful interpretation of unfamiliar words, idioms, or structures. Verb tenses and moods have been largely mastered. Interpretation of the subjunctive and conditional forms and passive constructions in indirect discourse of formal writing is generally complete, and with few errors. Able to achieve overall comprehension of material, even though there may be some gaps in detail. Is generally able to comprehend facts, although misinterpretation may still occur. Can draw inferences, but may be unable to appreciate nuances or stylistics.

Novice-Low
No functional ability in writing German.

Novice-Mid
No practical communicative writing skills. Able to copy isolated words and short phrases. Able to transcribe previously studied words or phrases. Able to write name, address, dates and other number, as well as common expressions such as those used in greetings and leave-takings.

GERMAN ENTRANCE STANDARD: Writing (Novice-High)

SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls:	Is usually able to:	No consistent accuracy
--very familiar topics: names, numbers zero to 20, dates, days of the week, months of the year, own nationality, common adjectives of nationality, addresses, other simple biographical information, common objects, short memorized phrases --simple fixed social formulae (e.g., Guten Tag! or Ich heisse... or Wie geht es dir? or Wie geht es Ihnen?)	--write simple fixed expressions and limited memorized material when this information is requested on forms such as hotel reservations and travel documents --write simple lists --write simple yes/no questions and answer them in writing	SEE PARTIAL CONTROL

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls:	Is sometimes able to:	Is sometimes able to:
--simple survival needs --very simple social demands --common objects (classroom, work, home) --cognates --numbers 1 to 100 --familiar topics grounded in personal experience (e.g., likes and dislikes, daily routines, dates and times, everyday events, immediate surroundings at home, at work, and at school)	--create recombinations of memorized materials --write short messages such as simple questions, notes, postcards, and phone messages --create statements or questions --compose short paragraphs --take simple notes --narrate simple events	--produce the present tense of common regular verbs and of such very common irregular verbs as haben, sein, tun, wollen, können, wissen, verstehen, and möchten --use werden+infinitive to express future time --use basic constructions and inflections (e.g., subject/verb agreement, noun/adjective agreement, syntactic constructions expressing present and future time) --use word order with interrogative forms --use word order in simple statements --use word order with the imperative of separable prefix verbs (e.g., Kommen Sie mit!) --make some sociolinguistic distinctions (e.g., titles of address, (Herr, Frau, Fräulein)

ACTFL PROVISIONAL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES: GERMAN WRITING

Intermediate-Low

Has sufficient control of the writing system to meet limited practical needs. Can write short messages, such as simple questions or notes, postcards, phone messages and the like. Can take simple notes on material dealing with very familiar topics within the scope of limited language experience. Can create statements or questions, in the present tense using negative and interrogative constructions, within the scope of limited language experience. Material produced consists of recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures into simple sentences. Can express present and future by using the present tense and adverbs of time such as *morgen, heute, nächste Woche, nächstes Jahr.* For example: *Ich schreibe heute eine Prüfung. Wir fahren nächste Woche nach Berlin.* Generally cannot express past time by past tenses, but may incorrectly use the present tense and an adverb of time such as *gestern, gestern abend, heute morgen* to convey past meaning. Awareness of gender apparent (many mistakes). Awareness of case system sketchy. Some correct use of predicate adjectives and personal pronouns *(ich, wir).*

Intermediate-Low continued

Vocabulary is limited to common objects and cognates, and is inadequate to express anything but elementary needs. Can express numbers from 1-100 with some misspellings. Often inserts native-language vocabulary for unknown words, and is generally not capable of circumlocution to get meaning across. Writing tends to be a loose collection of sentences or sentence fragments on very familiar topics (likes and dislikes, general routine, everyday events or situations). Makes continual errors in spelling (*ei* vs. *ie*, often omits umlauts), grammar (incorrect adjective endings, incorrect subject-verb agreement), and punctuation. Word order is random, but writing can be read and understood by a native reader used to dealing with foreigners. Able to produce appropriately some fundamental sociolinguistic distinctions in formal and familiar style, (*Herr, Frau, Fräulein)*, but no clear distinction between polite and familiar address forms (*Sie, du)*, such as appropriate subject pronouns, titles of address and basic social formulae.

GERMAN EXIT REQUIREMENT: Writing (Intermediate-Mid)

SUSTAINED CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of sustained control by the use of such modifiers as "frequently" or "usually".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Usually controls:	Is usually able to:	Is usually able to:
--simple survival needs --very simple social demands --familiar topics grounded in personal experience (e.g., likes and dislikes, daily routines, dates and times, everyday events, immediate surroundings at home, at work and at school)	--compose short paragraphs --take simple notes --narrate simple events	--produce the present tense of common regular verbs and of such very common irregular verbs as haben, sein, tun, wollen, können, wissen, verstehen, and möchten --use werden+infinitive to express future time --use basic constructions and inflections (e.g., subject/verb agreement, noun/adjective agreement, syntactic constructions expressing present and future time) --use word order in simple statements --use word order with interrogative forms --use word order with the imperative of separable prefix verbs (e.g., Kommen Sie mit!) --express past time using content words and time expressions

PARTIAL CONTROL: Statements in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the concept of partial control by the use of such modifiers as "uneven" or "occasionally".

CONTENT	FUNCTION	ACCURACY
Sometimes controls:	Is sometimes able to:	Is sometimes able to:
--survival needs relating to food, lodging, transportation, immediate surroundings (classroom, work, home) and situations --simple social demands --familiar topics (e.g., autobiographical information, preferences, daily routine, everyday events and situations) --biographical data --work experience --factual topics --simple current events	--take notes in some detail --respond to personal questions --write routine correspondence and simple discourse of at least several paragraphs --write cohesive synopses, resumés, paraphrases, and summaries --write short compositions --write short narratives and descriptions	--express present and future time using the future and the present tense of common regular and irregular verbs, including reflexive verbs --use the compound past with both haben and sein auxiliaries --use simple past --use separable prefix verbs --use reflexive verbs --use basic syntactic patterns (e.g., high frequency object pronouns, determiners, negation in past tenses and future) --use a dictionary to help express simple ideas --use correct adjective endings --be understood by native speakers not used to dealing with foreigners

ACTFL PROVISIONAL PROFICIENCY GUIDELINES: GERMAN WRITING

Intermediate-High

Sufficient control of writing sytem to meet most survival needs and limited social demands. Can take notes in some detail on familiar topics (autobiographical information, preferences, daily routine, simple descriptions and narration of everyday events and situations) and respond to personal questions on such topics using elementary vocabulary and common structure. Can write simple letters, brief synopses and paraphrases, summaries of biographical data and work experience, and short compositions on familiar topics. Can create sentences and short paragraphs relating to most survival needs (food, lodging, tranportation, immediate surroundings and situations) and limited social demands. Can express fairly accurately present and future time, using the future and the present tense of most common regular and irregular verbs, including reflexive verbs. Can use the compound past with both *haben* and *sein* auxiliaries, but does not always use it correctly or appropriately. Past tense is also attempted with common

Intermediate-High continued

simple past forms (*sagte, hatte, war).* Several high frequency separable prefix verbs appear in the indicative (*ich gehe mit).* There is inconsistent coding of proper dative and accusative cases following prepositions in singular and plural. Shows good control of elementary vocabulary and some control of basic syntactic patterns (some object pronouns, and determiners, usually use of negative in past tenses and future with correct placement, etc.). Still has problems in inverted word order and in proper placement of time, place, and manner phrases. Major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts. Dictionary usage may still yield incorrect vocabulary or forms, although can use a dictionary to advantage to express simple ideas. Generally does not use basic cohesive elements of discourse to advantage (relative constructions, object pronouns, connectors) and the like. Writing, though faulty, is comprehensible to native speakers used to reading German written by non-natives. Is able to express a few thoughts for which vocabulary is unknown via circumlocutions, but may insert native-language equivalents for unknown words or use native-language syntactic patterns when expressing ideas beyond current level of linguistic competence.

Advanced

Able to write routine social correspondence and simple discourse of at least several paragraphs on familiar topics. Can write simple social correspondence, take notes, and write cohesive summaries, resumés, and short narratives and descriptions on factual topics. Able to write about everyday topics by using adjectives, with mostly correct gender and case. Genders of high frequency words are mostly correct. Able to narrate events using present, compound past, some simple past, and future forms, although the contrast between uses of the two past tenses may not be consistently accurate. Occasional use of some subjunctive forms to express politeness and preference. Has sufficient writing vocabulary to express oneself simply with some circumlocutions. Can write about a very limited number of current events or daily situations and express personal preferences and observations in some detail using basic structures. Is able to recycle new but meaningful phrases whether lexical or structural, i.e., lifts phrases appropriately, writing appears more sophisticated. When writing own thoughts is more likely to paraphrase according to native language at times. Controls many separable and reflexive verbs and double infinitive construction in main clauses. Good control of morphology in verb tenses; correct ending for regular and irregular verbs in tenses mentioned above. Often uses correct endings for adjectives. Controls frequently used structures such as interrogatives, negatives (but still not always correctly placed), prepositions with some rest/motion distinction but not always proper cases for the distinction, and choice of determiners (*der* vs. *ein).* Prepositions used after verbs or adjectives is often inaccurate. Writing is understandable by a native speaker not used to reading German written by non-natives. Writer uses a limited number of cohesive devices such as a single object pronoun (direct or indirect. Some use of relative pronouns to combine sentences and some common conjunctions are used (*denn, weil, wann, wo,* etc.) Mistakes in subordinate clause auxiliary verb placement and double infinitive order. Able to join sentences in limited discourse, but has difficulty and makes frequent errors producing complex sentences. Paragraphs are reasonably unified and coherent.

Advanced Plus

Shows ability to write about most common topics with precision and in some detail. Can write fairly detailed resumés and summaries and take accurate notes. Can handle most informal and business correspondence. Can describe and narrate personal experiences and explain simply point of view in prose discourse by using introductory phrases (e.g., *meiner Meinung nach, ich glaube, dass..., ich bin sicher, dass...).* Can write about concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Normally controls general vocabulary with circumlocution or modification where necessary, e.g., may use negation plus lexical item for an unknown antonym, or modify words with *sehr, viel,* etc., if a more specific term is unknown, or resort to a category label for unknown components. Often shows remarkable fluency or ease of expression, but under time constraints (e.g., no opportunity to rewrite), and pressure (e.g., testing), language may be inaccurate and/or incomprehensible, especially if important lexical items are missing or if inaccurate tense usage interferes with meaning. Generally strong in either grammar or vocabulary, but not in both. Weaknesses and unevenness in one of the foregoing or in spelling result in occasional miscommunication. Areas of weakness may involve detail in the use of simple constructions: irregular plurals of nouns, adjectives; determiners (usage rather than form); prepositions (after verbs or adjectives); negatives (still has problems with subtleties of placement and form, *nicht ein* vs. *kein).* Weaknesses are also observed in more complex structures: tense usage; compound past vs. simple past after *als;* avoidance where possible of *würde* in *wenn* clauses; passive constructions (rarely uses *man* or reflexive but tends to parallel English with consequent use of *sein*); statal and real passive confused; word order still a problem, sometimes with inversion, reflexive and auxiliary placement in dependent word order. Good control of simple dependent work order, subordinating and coordinating conjunctions (*denn* vs. *weil),* and relative pronouns. Irregular control of infinitive clauses with *zu.* Uses wide range of tenses as time indicators including hypothetical subjunctive (with *würde* plus infinitive, *hätte, wäre, könnte).* Uses *da(r)-* and *wo(r)-* compounds. Better control of prepositions, adjectives and case endings, but mistakes still occur. Some misuse of vocabulary still evident, especially when using dictionary for words with multiple meanings or where related words carry various functions, but does use a dictionary to advantage where a fairly direct bilingual translation and no intralingual ambiguity exists. Shows ability to use circumlocution. Writing is understandable to native speakers not used to reading material written by non-natives, though the style is still obviously foreign.

Superior

Able to use written German effectively in most formal and informal exchanges on practical, social, and professional topics. Can write most types of correspondence, such as memos, social and business letters (with appropriate formulaic introductions and closings), short research papers, and statements of position. Can express hypotheses and conjectures, and present arguments or points of view accurately and effectively. Can write about areas of special interest and handle topics in special fields. Has good control of a full range of structures so that time, description, and narration can be used to expand upon ideas. Errors in basic structures are sporadic and not indicative of communicative control. In addition to simple tenses, can use compound tenses to show time relationships among events and to express coordinate and subordinate ideas clearly and coherently. Has lexical control of

Superior continued

subordinate conjunctions. Controls dependent word order with auxiliary and reflexive placement such as: *ich weiss, dass er hatte gestern kommen sollen* and *er sagte, dass sich der Mann umzog.* Able to use quotative subjunctive (subjunctive I) consistently, as well as passives plus modals. Can use hypothetical subjunctive (subjunctive II) correctly, as well as directional adverbs (*hinauf, hinunter, herüber,* etc.) and the *lassen* construction. Has a wide enough vocabulary to convey the message accurately, though style may be foreign. Uses dictionary to a high degree of accuracy to supplement specialized vocabulary or to improve content or style. Although sensitive to differences in formal and informal style, still may not tailor writing precisely or accurately to a variety of audiences (except for personal vs. business correspondence) or styles.